

Boston, 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1846.

My dear Sir,

I have so much to say to you - though but a brief time to say it in - that I cannot feel reconciled to the Acadia's going without bearing a letter from me to you. - It is my intention to send you a small parcel of pamphlets, &c. by the regular trading-packet of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst., hence to Liverpool; which parcel I hope you may receive by the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. It will be directed to care of Ges. Wright & Co. Liverpool, with a request to forward it by "package express" to Bristol. This, if I rightly remember, will be according to directions you gave me.

You will rejoice with us in the safe return of Mr. Garrison to Boston. He had a quick passage, and looks as well as ever I saw him. His rapid journeying & fatiguing labour do not appear to have had any injurious effect, but the opposite. He called to see me a few days since, (I am, with my family, making a visit in Boston - and have been confined to the house a number of days by a severe cold with some fever; I was thus not able to call on Mr. G., and he, hearing that I was shut up, kindly came to me. I may just add, I have pretty much recovered from my illness, so that I go out again.) Mr. Garrison speaks with great delight of his visit to your country. I of course made particular inquiries about my Bristol friends, and I found he retained a lively remembrance of his visit at B., and of the great kindness & attention which there had been shown to him. He spoke, with evident feeling, of your going to Liverpool to see him before he sailed; and I am sure he highly prizes this unmistakeable proof of your regard for him and interest in the Anti Slavery Cause. I spoke to him about Mr. Hincks and the "Inquirer", and he replied in the most cordial & friendly expressions. I had not time to pursue my inquiries farther. I have since met him twice, but not so as to have much conversation with him. It seems some Newcastle friends have raised £150. or thereabouts, for the purpose of redeeming F. Douglass from his slavery; and that his owner (God spare us!) has consented, for that sum, to execute free papers, so that he shall be free from all legal obligations to servitude. I was taken quite aback, in sailor phrase, when I heard of this. Indeed at first I refused to believe it. I did not think F. D. would acknowledge, or consent that others (his friends) should acknowledge, that any man



had this right of ownership in him. And yet, as I have reflected upon it, I cease to wonder. I find I have not fully & sufficiently realised that F. Douglass is still, on United States soil, a slave; that, to him, no part of our territory is free territory; that everywhere, ~~his~~ under our Constitution, his master's power is over him, and that anywhere his master's <sup>arm</sup> may reach him; - and, if it does reach him, that there is no law or human tribunal which can afford him the least protection. Under such circumstances, it is anything but wonderful that he should rejoice in the prospect of his complete emancipation. Mr. Garrison told me that F. D. had not requested, or in any way suggested, this step; it was ~~a~~ purely voluntary & self-originated with his Newcastle friends; but, he added, there was no doubt that Douglas felt as if a mountain had been taken off from his soul. Mr. G. thinks the business was not ~~not~~ well managed; and that the same end might have been effected for a far less sum. The sum of £150. or £200. was offered to the "master"; he consented to do as desired for the smaller sum, which, Mr. G. said, gave him a better opinion of the man than anything else he had heard of him. Two or three hundred dollars (instead of near \$750.) might doubtless have done as well.

I have read the "Inquirer" of late with increased respect for Mr. Hincks, and with increased pleasure. Mr. H. is, both intellectually and morally, a strong man. I do hope there will be virtue, and wisdom enough among British Unitarians, to sustain the "Inquirer", and suitably recompense Mr. Hincks. His articles on the "Anti-Slavery League" and "Evangelical Alliance" have been ~~it~~ bold, decided, thorough, and yet expressed with all the calmness and self-possession that the most prudent Englishman (!) could desire. Don't think I am laughing at that honest quality of prudence; - while I must confess that the samples of it we have had in America have not tended to enlarge our admiration of it - i.e. as Abolitionists. I was greatly pleased with Mr. Hincks's reply to the [wretched] editorial in the Christian Register about Mr. Haughton & Mr. Dana. The Register has published Mr. Hincks's remarks, [with a somewhat unwonted liberality.] I see that "Amicus" continues to write. He still is groping about, as a blind man, trying to find something which still eludes his grasp. He seems to me dissatisfied and soured. I hope as he "pursues this subject" (to quote his words) that he will discover that it is a poor way to show friendship to a cause to be perpetually pecking at its friends. If he cannot give the "Anti-Slavery League" his co-operation, let him serve the



Antislavery Cause some other way - provided always, that he wishes to serve it. But if he continues to quarrel with whatever Abolitionists do, he must make up his mind to be accounted the enemy and not the friend of Abolition. I wish some English Correspondent would vindicate Dr. Channing's memory from the injury "Amicus" is ~~doing~~ <sup>doing</sup> it in quoting him wholly as a censurer of the Abolitionists. "Amicus" quotes from Dr. C.'s earliest writings on Slavery. It is perfectly well known here that his opinions of the Abolitionists & their measures had become materially modified before his death, and that the obvious tendencies of his mind were to a farther change, and a heartier co-operation with them. One of their association he never would have been; for he had a great horror of all associations; and was almost offended - certainly very far from being gratified - when he found that he was elected President of the Am<sup>er</sup>. Unit<sup>ed</sup> Association one year. He took the ~~ear~~ first opportunity to resign the office & decline a re-election. Perhaps I have mentioned this to you before. One, who ~~it~~ would give a fair idea of Dr. Channing's views of the measures & plans of the Abolitionists, will not confine <sup>himself to</sup> ~~his~~ extracts from Dr. C.'s earlier antislavery productions. See, his works.

Last Saturday I called to see Mrs. Chapman. She told me the Bristol box of contributions had arrived, and was then in the Custom House. Last evening, as we sat at tea, a little parcel was left <sup>at</sup> ~~to~~ the door, & brought to me at the table - which proved to be the 18<sup>th</sup> volume of Chambers' Miscellany - your daughter's kind and very welcome gift to my little girl. Please assure Miss Estlin of the hearty thanks of us all. My children value these books very highly. They are decidedly of the very best; and form an admirable repository of "useful & entertaining" knowledge. My wife feels much obliged to your daughter for these friendly remembrances. We both "live in hope" of one day visiting Europe together, & seeing those friends who have become so much endeared to us and given us so much cause to remember them. I would we could see at least some of you here, first. I very much wish that you, my dear Sir, might see Boston, and get that idea of our people & our ways which only seeing can give. - I suppose, & indeed feel sure, that there is a bundle of ~~you~~ 25 of your Tracts for me in the Box; but I have not yet received them; probably the articles are unpacked slowly. I shall with great pleasure send one to Dr. Howel



as you request. I will also thank you, in advance, for them. I shall be very glad of them indeed, and know that I can distribute them to advantage.

My last letter to you was by the 1<sup>st</sup> October Ship. About the middle of that month I rec<sup>d</sup>. yours dated Bristol Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. By Mr. Garrison, I received your note of Oct. 15., acknowledging the reception of my letter above-named, & of some papers relating to the abduction case. I am very glad that you have written to Dr. Howe, and much pleased to find that you know him. He is a noble man, fearless and full of kindly feeling. You will have seen his letter (3 or 4 lines long) accepting the nomination of the "Independent Whigs" of Boston to stand as a <sup>for Congress</sup> candidate against R. C. Winthrop who voted the 16 Million dollars & 50,000 Volunteers asked for by Mr. Polk for the Mexican War. Dr. H. is an intimate friend of my father's, who has been, from the first, one of the Trustees of the Massachusetts Asylum for the Blind, of which Dr. Howe is Principal. - By Mr. Garrison I also rec<sup>d</sup>. yours of Nov. 2<sup>d</sup>; also a note from Miss Carpenter of ~~Nov.~~ Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>; to both of these I shall more fully reply when I make up the afore-named parcel by the 5<sup>th</sup> Dec. Ship. Thanks seem but a poor return for your letters; and it doesn't seem to me possible that my letters can afford you the gratification which I derive from those of my Bristol correspondents.

I am glad that you have forwarded 100 Copies of your "Brief Notice" to the Bazaar. They will be a most valuable addition to the Book Table, and of much service to the Cause.

Mr. Garrison feels that his visit to England has been one of importance and real service to the Anti-Slavery Cause. It has brought forward, developed, and secured some real friends. It has awakened some slumbering fire. I think he was himself surprised at the amount of indifference to the subject, and, still worse, of actual pro-slavery, which he found in England & Scotland. He thinks many of your countrymen bear away the palm from all on this side water for vigour in framing excuses for Slaveholding, and reasons for joining in social and Christian(!) fellowship with Slaveholders & their apologists. - Whether as you think, he has done some harm, or prevented some good, to the Cause, by volunteering his opinions on other subjects, is a question which I feel unable to decide. You must certainly be more competent, on this point. But I can not willingly think that the real advance of any good cause is obstructed by the utterance of the truth with regard to any other. Some timid ones may be

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offended, go back, and "follow no more" with these plain-spoken advocates of right and justice. But all this shall obstruct the way of right & justice only apparently; so I think, and I have almost, if not quite, learned not to regret the temporary loss which is endured by speaking, & laboring for, the right and the true. These people of expediences & policies and the like are the very ones who will desert you at a pinch. Is it not to the entire fidelity and truthfulness of a few that we owe, under God, the progress the Antislavery cause has made in this country? Surely, to nothing else; such is the testimony of those whose testimony is best worth the having. The principle of the "League" is a high one, and applies a severe test, I know. But it is the only sufficient basis & corner-stone for the movement. It is making Christ, in the integrity & completeness of his truth, the Corner Stone. Many will not indeed accept it. When have the many accepted Christ? His Gospel is one of no compromise with sin & wrong - one of infinite compassion & forgiveness to the repentant wrong-doer; but it is to him as repentant, not as continuing in sin. I cannot conceive <sup>of</sup> the Gospel as accommodating itself to degrees & shades of wrong - and I'm sure you cannot; so I need not pursue this subject with you.

Besides, I have written till I must stop, or lose the opportunity to send. I shall take up again the thread of my discourse in a day or two. - I have not yet seen the "Chrn. Reformer" of October, but intend to find it, if I can; and that, before I write again.

The accident to the "Great Britain" is exceedingly to be regretted, and I fear she will prove a total loss. The newspapers of this packet will bear to you a most heart-rending account of the wreck of the Steamboat Atlantic in Long Island Sound on Friday morning last (Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>). She was a new boat last Spring, of enormous length, and speed of 15 to 20 miles an hour - fitted up ~~with~~ in the most luxurious & expensive manner. She ran upon <sup>one</sup> the great lines of travel between Boston & New York - i.e. from Norwich (Connecticut) to N. York. on Wednesday last, at midnight, she left Norwich with a smaller number of passengers than usual, in the teeth of a violent gale - a reckless procedure



to which it is said the Captain made some objections, but yielded to the desires of his passengers, who were (as usual with Americans) in a prodigious hurry to get on. Soon after getting fairly into the Sound she was struck successively by three heavy seas which so wrenched her long & narrow frame as to burst open the steam-bog, and thus disable the engine. Being then at the mercy of the winds & waves she drifted rapidly upon a rocky shore. Three anchors were cast out which were not sufficient to hold her, and after dragging them all day Thursday & Thursday night, she struck upon the rocks at 4 a.m. Friday morning (it being very cold & entirely dark) and went almost instantly to pieces. About 40 passengers perished, as well as several of the crew, including the Captain. About 30 passengers escaped, washed by the surf over & among the rocks - most of them badly bruised, and with the entire loss of their effects on board. Among the passengers was an elderly gentleman of Birmingham, Mr. Henry Van Wart. He was saved.

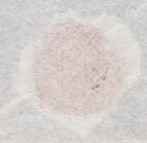
I must stop here; I cannot even read over my letter to supply deficiencies; pray excuse all, and with my best wishes for your happiness, my hopes for your enjoyment of your approaching Christmas holidays, and with affectionate regards to your daughter and all my Bristol friends, believe me,

Ever & most respectfully, Yours

Samuel May.



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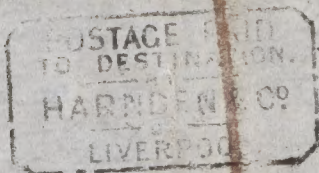


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To John B. Estlin Esq.

Bristol.

Repaid.

England.



Dec 1. 1846

Mr. May

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